

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-16 and 18-29 are pending in the captioned application. The Examiner has required a restriction of the claims under 35 U.S.C. §121 and §372. Applicants elect, with traverse, to prosecute the invention of Group I, namely claims 1-16 and 29, drawn to a surface modified base matrix and its use. Applicants reserve the right to file one or more divisional applications on the non-elected groups.

The Examiner also required a species election. The Examiner states that the specific methods of derivatization results in different species of modified matrix. The Examiner regards that claims 12-16 correspond to the species listed and claim 12 is generic. In response, Applicants elect, without traverse, to prosecute the species of claim 14, e.g., derivatization into “a cation-exchanger by attachment of sulfopropyl groups to one or more of the hydroxyl groups of the polymer”. Applicants submit that claims 1-14 and 29 encompassing the elected invention.

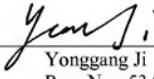
Applicants respectfully assert that the claims are in allowable form and earnestly solicit the allowance of the claims 1-16 and 29.

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Reply to Office action of April 13, 2007

Early and favorable consideration is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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